# Expert Opinion & Correspondence File

## GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH BY THE SUBJECT:

John Lindsay Robert Guest, FCDA
M. Bus, Grad Dip IR/HRM, B.Ed. B.A

14th June 2025

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## HOW THE GUEST FAMILY'S RECORDS RECONCILIATION PROECT EVOLVED INTO A PEERAGE PETITION & SERIES OF FOUR BOOKS

The subject, John Guest FCDA, is an Australian researcher and author who has published several books stemming from decades of genealogical research, which he paralleled with a successful industry career from January 1978 to December 2020. In 2018, he was invited by the Officer of Arms and King Arms at the College of Arms to present his genealogical work in progress, titled "Restoration of a Most Interesting Bloodline." It contained extensive evidence-based genealogical continuity records and factual narratives focusing on his lineage and that of his siblings and cousins to last verified member of the ancient Hallifax family, documented in College of Arms record Ms7D14/45, dated December 16, 1788.

As the fifth great-grandson of Reverend Robert Hallifax (1760-1838) from Magdalen College, Oxford, John, along his cousins Dennis Keith Lillee AM, MBE, and Darren John Halifax BA, sought to update their shared family history with the College of Arms. Taking the advice of senior heralds of the College of Arms, the petition they requested included putting forward Darren Halifax of Perth, Western Australia's name to succeed to an overlooked peerage, the title Earl of Oxford, which John discovered.

This led to further inquiries by the Crown's Privy Council Office for Guest to undertake additional research and petition for His Majesty to consider declaring the creation of the Earldom for Edgar the Ætheling.

In September 2024, Professor Tom Licence MA, MPhil, PhD, FHEA, FRHistS, FSA, Professor of Medieval History at the University of East Anglia and Senior Research Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge, concluded that Edgar was likely made an Earl by William I after examining Guest's extensive genealogical research.

Six months were allocated for Government lawyers to examine the materials, and on April 23, 2025, they contacted the Crown's Privy Council office, informing them that His Majesty's Secretariat, Privy Council, and Registrar of the Peerage lacked the authority to evaluate the additional research.

This investigation left His Majesty's Privy Council office without the necessary power to request the King to declare that Edgar the Ætheling was granted the Earldom of Oxford by William I. While this intriguing advice from Government lawyers does not contradict what is viewed by His Majesty's office and the petitioners as presumptively positive in favour of Edgar the Ætheling, the supplemental petition remains pending.

On 4, 2025, expert genealogists from the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies (AIGS) recognised John Guest FCDA's four-volume genealogical series, which traces his lineage and that of his cousins, Dennis and Darren, back nearly 1,000 years Malcolm Canmore and St Margaret of Scotland to be most trustworthy and accurate. Their independent review affirmed Guest's work as "magnus opus."

After two independent verifications over many years confirming the accuracy of his genealogical research by the College of Arms and the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies, his work will be permanently preserved in the King's library, the Privy Council Library in London, and the College of Arms library, as well as in the AIGS library in Melbourne.

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# RESTORATION OF A MOST INTERESTING ANCIENT BLOODLINE

An evidence-based genealogical study

John Guest

M.Bus, Grad Dip IR/HRM, B.Ed., B.A

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29/4/2019.

Dear Mr. Guest.

As promised, extracts from The Complete Peerage and Burke's Peerage regarding the Grey Peerages. With best wishes.

Grant Bavister.

With Compliments

Grant Bavister
College of Arms
Queen Victoria Street,
LONDON, EC4V 4BT.

☎ 07719 284 393
hereditary.claims@gmail.com
gbavister@college-of-arms.gov.uk

page 146,
note (f), line 18, after 'furred.' add 'At the tournament in Lichfield, 9 Apr. 21 Edw. III (1347), occurs the name (with 10 others) of John Grey (P.R.O., E 101 Wardrobe Accts, 21–3 Edw. III, 391/15, *ex inform.* John Brownbill). This John Grey is perhaps also more likely to be John Grey of Rotherfield.'

page 148,
note (c), line 1, after 'Poynings' add '[1st LORD POYNINGS]'

page 149,
line 12, after '4thly,' add '(lic. 20 Dec. 1398)'

## GREY (of Rougemont)

page 151,
line 2, for '1449' read '1450'

## GREY (of Ruthin)

page 153,
line 10, after '*m.*' add ', by 1311' [*Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1307–13*, p. 401, cited in R.I. Jack, 'The Greys of Ruthin', PhD thesis, London, 1961, p. 429]
line 12, for '(DE VALENCE)' read 'DE VALENCE, sometimes *styled*'

page 154,
line 11, for '25 Oct. 1348 and 4 May 1350' read '6 Jan. 1349 and 6 Feb. 1350'
note (c), delete all detail and replace by '*Records of Harrold Priory*, ed. G.H. Fowler, Beds. Hist. Record Soc., vol. 17, 1935, p. 156; PRO, E403/349, cited by Jack, *op. cit.*

page 155,
lines 5–6, delete from 'Sir' to 'LESTRAUNGE]' and replace by 'John LESTRAUNGE of Blackmere [2nd LORD STRANGE]
note (c), delete all detail and replace by 'The filiation of Eleanor is proved by the deposition of William Alnwick in 1408 (College of Arms MS., Proc. in Cur. Mar. I 227). Also, this lady Eleanor had a br., Hamon (*Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1381–5*, p. 338). Eleanor, da. of Roger Lestrange of Knockin, also suggested as her father, did not. See Jack, *op. cit.*'

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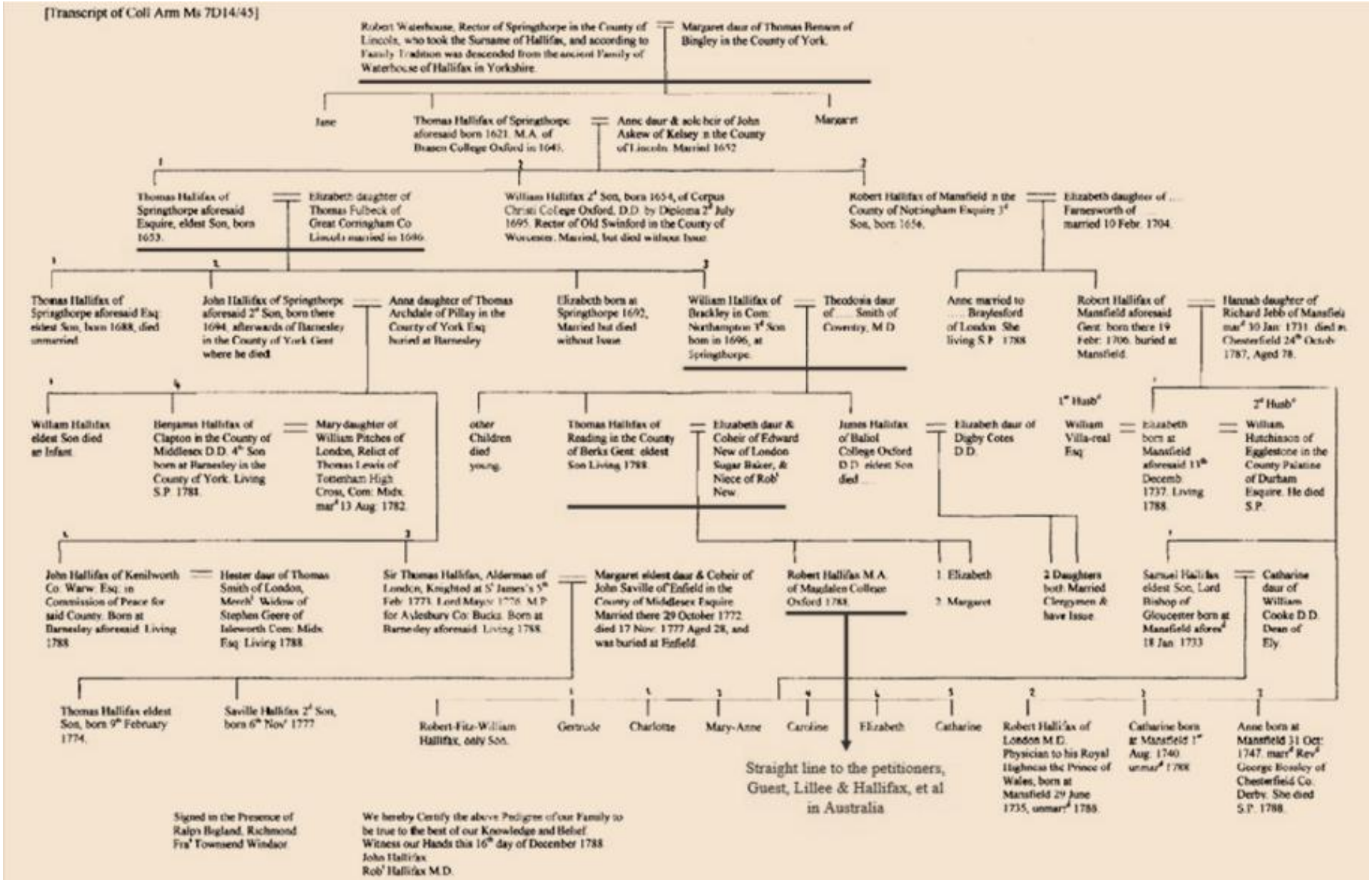
[Transcript of Coll Arm Ms 7D14/45]


Robert Waterhouse, Rector of Springthorpe in the County of Lincoln, who took the Surname of Hallifax, and according to Family Tradition was descended from the ancient Family of Waterhouse of Hallifax in Yorkshire.
Margaret daur of Thomas Benson of Bingley in the County of York.
Jane
Thomas Hallifax of Springthorpe aforesaid born 1621. M.A. of Brazen College Oxford in 1640.
Anne daur & sole heir of John Askew of Kelsey in the County of Lincoln. Married 1652
Margaret
Thomas Hallifax of Springthorpe aforesaid Esquire, eldest Son, born 1653.
Elizabeth daughter of Thomas Fulbeck of Great Corringham Co Lincoln married in 1686.
William Hallifax 2d Son, born 1654, of Corpus Christi College Oxford, D.D. by Diploma 2d July 1695. Rector of Old Swinford in the County of Worcester. Married, but died without Issue
Robert Hallifax of Mansfield in the County of Nottingham Esquire 3d Son, born 1656.
Elizabeth daughter of .... Farnesworth of married 10 Febr. 1704.
Thomas Hallifax of Springthorpe aforesaid Esq: eldest Son, born 1688, died unmarried
John Hallifax of Springthorpe aforesaid 2d Son, born there 1694, afterwards of Barnesley in the County of York Gent where he died
Anna daughter of Thomas Archdale of Pillay in the County of York Esq: buried at Barnesley
Elizabeth born at Springthorpe 1692, Married but died without Issue
William Hallifax of Brackley in Com: Northampton 3d Son born in 1696, at Springthorpe.
Theodosia daur of .... Smith of Coventry, M.D.
Anne married to .... Brayfesford of London. She living S.P. 1788
Robert Hallifax of Mansfield Gent: born there 19 Febr: 1706. buried at Mansfield.
Hannah daughter of Richard Jebb of Mansfield mard 30 Jan: 1731. died at Chesterfield 24th Octob: 1787, Aged 78.
William Hallifax eldest Son died an Infant
Benjamin Hallifax of Clapton in the County of Middlesex D.D. 4th Son born at Barnesley in the County of York. Living S.P. 1788.
Mary daughter of William Pitches of London, Relict of Thomas Lewis of Tottenham High Cross, Com: Midx. mard 13 Aug. 1782.
other Children died young.
Thomas Hallifax of Reading in the County of Berks Gent. eldest Son Living 1788.
Elizabeth daur & Coheir of Edward New of London Sugar Baker, & Niece of Robt New
James Hallifax of Baliol College Oxford D.D. eldest Son died ....
Elizabeth daur of Digby Cotes D.D.
1st Husb: William Villa-real Esq
Elizabeth born at Mansfield aforesaid 11th Decemb: 1737. Living 1788.
2d Husb: William Hutchinson of Egglestone in the County Palatine of Durham Esquire. He died S.P.
John Hallifax of Kenilworth Co: Warw: Esq: in Commission of Peace for said County. Born at Barnesley aforesaid. Living 1788.
Hester daur of Thomas Smith of London, Merch: Widow of Stephen Geere of Isleworth Com: Midx. Esq: Living 1788.
Sir Thomas Hallifax, Alderman of London, Knighted at St James's 5th Feb: 1773. Lord Mayor 1776. M.P. for Aylesbury Co: Bucks. Born at Barnesley aforesaid. Living 1788.
Margaret eldest daur & Coheir of John Saville of Enfield in the County of Middlesex Esquire. Married there 29 October 1772. died 17 Nov: 1777 Aged 28, and was buried at Enfield.
Robert Hallifax M.A. of Magdalen College Oxford 1788.
1 Elizabeth
2 Margaret
2 Daughters both Married Clergymen & have Issue
Samuel Hallifax eldest Son, Lord Bishop of Gloucester born at Mansfield aforesd 18 Jan: 1733
Catharine daur of William Cooke D.D. Dean of Ely
Thomas Hallifax eldest Son, born 9th February 1774.
Saville Hallifax 2d Son, born 6th Nov: 1777
Robert-Fitz-William Hallifax, only Son.
Gertrude
Charlotte
Mary-Anne
Caroline
Elizabeth
Catharine
Robert Hallifax of London M.D. Physician to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, born at Mansfield 29 June 1735, unmard 1788.
Catharine born at Mansfield 1st Aug: 1740. unmard 1788
Anne born at Mansfield 31 Oct: 1747. mard Revd George Bosley of Chesterfield Co: Derby. She died S.P. 1788.
Straight line to the petitioners, Guest, Lillee & Hallifax, et al in Australia
Signed in the Presence of Ralph Bigland. Richmond
Fra Townsend Windsor
We hereby Certify the above Pedigree of our Family to be true to the best of our Knowledge and Belief. Witness our Hands this 16th day of December 1788.
John Hallifax
Robt Hallifax M.D.

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John Lindsay Robert Guest
[redacted]
Australia

August 14th 2022

Her Majesty The Queen
[redacted]
England

Your Royal Highness,

**RE: SUBMISSION OF A RARE PEERAGE SUCCESSION CLAIM**

Congratulations Your Royal Highness, on the platinum jubilee of your most glorious reign, across all of your realms, and in particular, your most glorious reign of Australia.

[redacted] for Your Majesty's consideration, perhaps the most unusual, interesting and rare peerage succession claim submitted to the Crown.

[redacted] This dignity was confirmed on Edgar Atheling (1051-1125/6) by King William I (1028-1087).

Edgar died childless in 1125/6 and whilst he was survived by his nephew King David of Scotland (1082-1153), his personal dignity honour seems to have escaped entry on the peerage rolls the Crown relies.

I am joined in this petition by relatives Dennis Keith Lillee (1949-), MBE, AM and Darren John Halifax (1965-), B.A [redacted] Darren is present representative of the Hallifax Family, Coll. Arms, MS7D14/45, extant.

The evidence we submit further includes proof of our direct descent form Edgar Atheling's sister, Margaret of Wessex.

[redacted]

Should Her Royal Highness accept our evidence and restore Edgar's earldom the outcome would be viewed most favourably by the petitioners and all of the family members we represent. This includes any family member the Crown may prefer to stand in Edgar's place.

We appreciate any consideration your Grace may give to our petition and have the honour to be Your Majesty's most humble and obedient servants,

Darren John Halifax, B.A.
Head of the Hallifax Family, MS7D14/45, 1788, extant

[redacted]

Dennis Keith Lillee, MBE, AM

[redacted]

John Lindsay Robert Guest,
M. Bus, Post Grad. Dip. IR/HRM., B.Ed., B.A.

*Petitioner and Claimants*

*Signatures*

GUEST FAMILY COLLECTIONS

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## THE PETITION PROCESS & HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S DEATH

This first attempt to submit to the Crown the family's petition to have Edgar Atheling's peerage, Earl of Oxford 1066/67 recognised by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was received by Buckingham Palace on the 6th September 2022.

The petition dated 14th August 2022 was sent under instruction by Australian Post and Royal Mail, and was received at Buckingham Palace less than 48 hours prior to the death of the late, great, Queen Ellizabeth II. Her Majesty died at Balmoral Castle, Scotland on the 8th September 2022.

As requested by the His Majesty's King Charles III through his Crown Office a subsequent (digital) delivery system was put in place and a subsequent petition was submitted addressed to His Majesty, C/O, Mrs Ceri King, LVO, Head of the Crown Office, Deputy Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, Registrar of the Peerage, and carbon copied digitally as further advised to Miss Elaine Chilver, Deputy Head of the Crown Office & Assistant Registrar of the Peerage; and Mr Grant Bavister, College of Arms.

The additional correspondence supporting the Crown's consideration of the petition after Her Majesty's death by King Charles III's Crown Office, Crown in Chancery, Registrar of the Peerage follows.

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John Lindsay Robert Guest
[redacted]
Australia

15th February 2023

His Majesty The King
c/o Mrs Ceri King
Head of the Crown Office & Registrar of the Peerage
Crown Office, Rm. C2/13, House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW,
cc. Miss Elaine Chilver, Deputy Head of the Crown Office & Asst Registrar of the Peerage

Your Royal Highness,

**RE: SUBMISSION OF A RARE PEERAGE SUCCESSION CLAIM**

My name is John Lindsay Robert Guest (1960-), and I attach for Your Majesty's consideration, perhaps the most unusual, interesting and rare peerage succession claim submitted to the Crown.

[redacted]

This dignity was confirmed on Edgar Atheling (1051-1125/6) by King William I (1028-1087). Edgar died childless in 1125/6, and whilst he was survived by his nephew, David I of Scotland (1082-1153), his hereditary title seems to have escaped entry onto the peerage rolls the Crown relies.

I am joined in this petition by relatives Dennis Keith Lillee (1949-), MBE, AM and Darren John Halifax (1965-) B.A., [redacted] Darren is present representative of the Hallifax Family, Coll. Arms, MS7D14/45, extant.

[redacted]

Due to the rare nature of this most interesting claim, we mostly humbly suppose that Darren may succeed as a matter of right, or be considered [redacted] based on some similar recognition as His Majesty's grace and favour.

Should His Royal Highness accept our evidence and restore Edgar's earldom, the outcome would be viewed most favourably by the petitioners, and all of the family members we represent. This includes any family member the Crown may prefer to stand in Edgar's place.

We appreciate any consideration your Grace may give to our petition and have the honour to be Your Majesty's most humble and obedient servants,

Darren John Halifax, B.A.
Present representative Hallifax Family, Ms 7D14/45

[redacted]

Dennis Keith Lillee, MBE, AM

[redacted]

John Lindsay Robert Guest,
M. Bus, Post Grad. Dip. IR/HRM., B Ed., B.A.

*Petitioners and Claimants*

*Signatures*

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# HALLIFAX FAMILY HISTORY

## VOLUME II

## PETITION FOR SUCCESSION FROM AN ANCIENT PEERAGE OF POST CONQUEST ENGLAND

**Earldom of Oxford**

*First creation, December 1066*

PART AND PARCEL OF THE GUEST FAMILY, RECORDS RECONCILIATION PROJECT - HALLIFAX REGISTERED PEDIGREE, COLLEGE OF ARMS Ms 7D14/45, 16th DECEMBER 1788.

**Researcher and author:**

John Lindsay Robert Guest,
M.Bus. Grad Dip IR/HRM., B.Ed., B.A

15th February, 2023

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Grant Bavister
College of Arms, Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BT.

[redacted] hereditary.claims@gmail.com

J. L. R. Guest, Esq.
D. J. Halifax, Esq.
D. K. Lillee, Esq.

**By email only**: [redacted]

22nd January 2024.

*Dear Mr Guest,*

**Succession to the Earldom of Oxford**

Thank you for your claim and Petition dated the 23rd February 2023 in relation to proving the creation of and claim by yourself, Mr Halifax and Mr Lillee, to the Earldom of Oxford, said by you to have been created by King William I in December 1066. I am very sorry for the long delay coming back to you, but complex and convoluted claims take a large amount of time to consider and it is only this side of the New Year that I have had a sufficiently slack period to give this matter the attention it deserves.

NB. (1) Where below I express an opinion, it is mine alone, albeit based on 20+ years of experience of Peerage Law and succession claims, but it does not in any way bind Garter King of Arms or any tribunal that may in due course hear any case relating to the creation of, and/or succession to the Earldom; and (2) where I refer to "you" and "your" below, this of course is intended to include your co-claimants.

**Creation of the Earldom**

Evidence

I have carefully considered the evidence you have presented in relation to the creation and note that the earliest mention you have found for the ennoblement of Edgar Atheling is by Thomas Milles in 1610 and that this was followed in 1652 by Peter Heylen publishing a list of creations, showing that the first creation was in 1067. Written documents eg. State documents such as Charters, Letters Patent or Writs of Summons, evidencing the creation of a Peerage were all but unknown at the time of the Norman Conquest and of those that there were, will in many cases no longer exist; therefore, it appears that you can only rely on anecdotal evidence. Milles and Heylen are relatively early mentions of the creation in printed works and the authors must have obtained their information from some earlier source, suggesting earlier printed or written documents, or anecdotal information that had come down to them. The value of these relatively early references is that, Milles and Heyden would

be much less likely to have been able to copy earlier authors' work simply because mass printing and publication of popular histories and encyclopaedias did not exist; therefore they are less likely to have copied without enquiry; in general the earlier the work referencing the creation of the Earldom the greater weight I would give to it because of the likelihood of original research.

If you were able to locate further early printed or written material referencing the creation of the Earldom say from the late 15th century and before, this would in my opinion strengthen the case for the creation of the title. It occurs to me that it would greatly assist your submissions in favour of the actual creation of the Earldom if you could find a reference to Edgar Atheling as Earl of Oxford in *The Domesday Book*, which as you will be aware was ordered by William I to be compiled as, in effect, the first land registry record and which, I would expect Edgar to appear in as he must have been a reasonably significant landowner in England. Such a reference, being almost contemporary with his creation of Earl by William, would, I think carry significant weight in aide of your submissions.

Destination/remainder of the Earldom

I agree with you, as per Palmer's *Peerage Law in England* (1907), that if this Earldom existed, or exists, it was an incorporeal hereditament held in fee simple; this legal concept is now all but obsolete in English law, having been superseded by modern land law, but like many aspects of Peerage Law, it still has its niche relevance. The closest correlation in Peerage Law that we see now is the destination, almost always in relation to early Scottish hereditary titles, to "heirs of the body [of the grantee] whomsoever". This destination provides for the descent of the title to the heirs of the body of the grantee (the 1st Peer or Baronet of the creation), with males preferred; when the lines of descent from such male line(s) are exhausted, then descent is derived from females; when these latter lines are extinct the line of descent is derived from the siblings of the grantee (who are in effect the "whomsoever" element of the destination), again with males preferred, only passing on to female lines when those male lines are extinct. As you will have gathered, an Earldom granted in fee simple quite possibly exist until the end of time itself. Note here the definition of a person who is capable of being an "heir" in Peerage Law for the purposes of a claim is a male or female born within wedlock. I shall revert to the significance of the destination we are discussing later in this letter. Finally on this point: although there has been much discussion over the centuries as to whether an ancient Earldom such as this may fall into abeyance as between females; it seems that it has been concluded that this is not the case.

Burden of proof

Turning now to the likelihood of you being able to prove the creation of the Earldom in 1066/67: In the recent Baronetcy claim of *In re. Pringle of Stichill* JCPC[1] (2016), the JCPC appears to have altered the burden of proof required to prove hereditary successions; prior to this claim the burden of proof was "beyond all reasonable doubt", whereas in Pringle, the Board of the JCPC considered the succession claim and made their findings "on the balance probabilities", a lower standard of proof. *If* this lower standard of proof were to be applied to

[1] Judicial Committee of the Privy Council sitting as the Baronets Committee

the discrete issue of establishing the fact of the creation of the Earldom, then the sources you have disclosed from the 17th century, coupled with anything further that your research produces, *may* be considered as sufficient to establish the creation of the Earldom. On this basis and subject to a tribunal's view about the burden of proof – bear in mind that the Privileges Committee of the House of Lords may not consider itself bound by the JCPC's decision in Pringle, as regards burden of proof – you *may*, notwithstanding the absence of contemporary written State documents evidencing the creation of the title, be able to establish the creation and existence of the Earldom of Oxford.

I should add that I note your submission in the claim that upon the death of Edgar without surviving issue, the Earldom passed under the terms of the fee simple destination to King David I of Scotland; I note also, and agree with you, that King David was most unlikely to acknowledge it, being King of Scotland – he had no use for an English Earldom. In a case where the heir to the Crown has a Peerage(s) and then succeeds to the Crown his Peerage(s) are said to merge with the Crown and be capable of re-grant; this would not be the case here as David was King of Scotland, not England; therefore upon his death the Earldom would have passed to his heir. I also agree with you, assuming this Earldom to have ever existed, that over the decades following Edgar's death, it was likely that the family and the English Crown lost sight of it and it fell out of corporate memory, so to speak.

**Proving succession to the Earldom**

[redacted] I have looked at the evidence you have produced to deal with your and your co-claimants' line and your have done a remarkable piece of research in an effort to establish the genealogical link back to Edgar Atheling.

Evidence

So far as I understand the evidence submitted, it is but one isolated line of descent only. For me to give an anything like a worthwhile opinion it will be essential for me to be shown an entire pedigree starting from Edgar Atheling and his siblings at the top and taking in all lines that could be senior to you and your co-claimants down to the extinction of all such senior lines, so that your line is left clear as the senior one; all these lines and all the persons in them will need to be properly evidenced - birth, marriages and deaths, as far as that is possible. Bearing in mind that it appears that this Earldom descends through the male *and then* female lines, this in effect doubles the amount of work that would ordinarily be necessary for a proof of descent through the male line only. Such a pedigree will, because of the timespan that must be traversed and the proliferation of descendants, be colossal.

If it is thought there are no senior lines, then evidence has to be produced that tends to demonstrate that fact; proving a negative can be very difficult and relies upon collateral evidence, such as Wills and other documents that tend to show that a given person died without male, female or any issue – Palmer deals with this subject to some extent at p. 295 and following.

You state at the commencement of the claim, at paragraphs A11 and A12, that you concede that there are inevitably other lines likely to be extant, but that you have been unable to identify them; this is an entirely understandable position bearing in mind the antiquity of this title, but unless evidence can be produced showing what work has been undertaken to discover senior lines to yours and to chase them down and where none have been discovered, an authoritative and preferably evidence-backed statement made as to why it is believed that no births gave rise to such senior lines in a given generation, be they now extinct or extant, doubt will inevitably arise in the mind of Garter King of Arms as being the person who is required to Report to the Lord Chancellor. Such doubt, without exaggeration, will be fatal to this claim.

Further, the Crown will never be advised to accede, in the absence of conclusive proof about the extinction or absence of potentially senior lines, to a claim to place a person on the Roll of the Peerage, to do so would be to risk the usurpation of an albeit unknown person who has actually, but unknowingly succeeded to the Earldom; this would result in the alienation of the Peerage in favour of another person, contrary to its established destination; the Crown although it created the Peerage, has, in accordance with longstanding precedent, no power, of itself, to alienate it – see Palmer at p. 2. There can only be, if the Earldom is extant, one person who has succeeded to the Earldom; whether that one person is aware of it or not, that person *is* the Earl – they just have to produce sufficient evidence of the fact; on this basis the prayer in Petition for the Crown to, in effect, determine the claim in favour of [redacted] cannot be acceded to.

[redacted] The claim to the Earldom as it currently stands will not be successful; but, with more evidence it may, as I have mentioned above, be possible to prove the creation of the Earldom and this aspect, if you were to proceed with it, would have to be considered by Government Law Officers who will advise the Crown whether it should refer the question to the Privileges Committee of the House of Lords for consideration and Report.

I reiterate that this is a remarkable piece of work [redacted]

I have placed your Petition and claim in the Crown Peerage claims records along with a copy of this letter in case of future reference.

*Your sincerely,*

*G. A. Bavister*

Grant A. Bavister

Grant Bavister
College of Arms, Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BT.

[redacted]

J. L. R. Guest, Esq.
D. J. Halifax, Esq.
D. K. Lillee, Esq.

**By email only**: [redacted]

1st February 2024.

*Dear Mr Guest,*

[redacted]

Thank you for your letter of the 29th January.

Looking into the future (rather than back nearly 1000 years) these are my *preliminary* thoughts:

1. If it were to be thought that you have been able to uncover sufficient further corroborative evidence in support of the actual creation of the Earldom in December 1066, then in such a case, where you were *not* at that time pursuing a "succession claim" to prove succession, I think that would amount to you seeking simply, in effect, a declaration from the Crown that it acknowledges the creation of the Earldom in 1066; such is not, in my opinion a "claim" and my feeling is that it could proceed through the necessary channels by Petition, without it being necessary to incorporate all the genealogical evidence in support of the claim into a Statutory Declaration, as would be the case if you were actually formally pursuing a *succession* claim. Therefore, if you decide to take this discrete issue further, I am, at present of the opinion that such additional statements as you may wish to make or evidence you wish to introduce should be in the form of a Supplemental Petition – basically the same format as your original Petition of last year but incorporating a statement that it is supplemental to that one.

2. If at some point you felt you were in the position to renew your succession claim, then that would be considered as any other succession claim that comes across my desk and the evidence in support of that claim would have to be incorporated into a Statutory Declaration, (which is in effect a genealogical audit trail) not a Petition, which means that you would have to deal with every generation and every relevant person in each generation in turn, as I mentioned in my letter, referencing and annexing (exhibiting) the evidence in support of each statement; this is not dissimilar

to what you have already done in last year's Petition, and to a certain extent the way you have constructed the Petition would be recyclable as a Statutory Declaration, but the statements in the Declaration would have to be very much more succinct – statements of fact, [redacted] I will of course be happy to give you detailed guidance on the construction and format of the Statutory Declaration.

I hope this is helpful. I shall place a copy of this letter on the Crown Office file and copy it to Ceri King and Elaine Chilver for their information.

*Your sincerely,*

*G. A. Bavister*

Grant A. Bavister

## SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION COVER LETTER SENT BY PETITIONERS

Mrs Ceri King, LVO, Head of Crown Office, Deputy Clerk of the Crown in Chancery
Registrar of the Peerage.
Miss Elaine Chilver, Deputy Head of the Crown Office & Assistant Registrar of the Peerage.
Mr Grant Bavister, College of Arms.

By email only:

24th September 2024

Dear Mrs King,

Having considered Mr Grant Bavister's expert opinion dated 22nd January 2024, we are pleased to submit the supplemental information to advance our petition to have Edgar Atheling's Earl of Oxford Title recognised by the Crown.

We also seek within to make clear that we withdraw our claims to succeed to Edgar Atheling's Earl of Oxford title, 1066/67 should it be declared.

You should find inside the supplemental submission that we took up Mr Bavister's offer to add to the evidence strengthening the case King William I created for Edgar the Earl of Oxford title.

In the process we consulted modern day experts, including Professor Tom Licence, MA, MPhil, PhD, FHEA, FRHistS, FSA, Professor of Medieval History, University of East Anglia, Senior Research Fellow, Magdalene College, Cambridge. It was Professor Licence who examined the veracity of the evidence we submit within, concluding in favour of the petitioners' statement Edgar the Aetheling was created an Earl of Oxford 1066/67 by William I.

We further believe that after we uncovered further fresh evidence, Professor Licence and other experts suggested, we have met, perhaps, a higher standard of proof.

Our final statements to the Crown and our determination can be found at page 77 within the attached Supplemental Petition, including our humble request, His Majesty King Charles III considers declaring the creation of the Earldom of Oxford, first creation, 1066 and listed in 1067.

Yours sincerely,

John Lindsay Robert Guest
Darren John Halifax
Dennis Keith Lillee

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# SUPPLEMENTAL

*to last year's petition dated 15th February 2023*

EDGAR THE ÆTHELING (r OCT - DEC 1066)

*was created by*

KING WILLIAM I (r 1066-1087)

## EARLDOM OF OXFORD 1066/67

*Incorporated within, added fresh corroborative evidence to support the actual creation of the Earldom of Oxford, 1066/67, and tied to the State Document, Domesday Book 1086.*

Researcher and author:
John Lindsay Robert Guest
M.Bus, Grad Dip IR/HRM, B.Ed, B.A.

Petitioners:
John Lindsay Robert Guest, M. Bus., Grad Dip IR/HRM., B.Ed., B.A, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
Dennis Keith Lillee, MBE, AM, Perth Western Australia.
Darren John Halifax, B.A, Perth, Western Australia, Australia.

24th September, 2024

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# TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

The Humble Petition is submitted by John Lindsay Robert Guest of [redacted] Victoria, Australia; Dennis Keith Lillee, MBE, AM of PO Box [redacted] South Perth, Western Australia 6951; and Darren John Halifax of PO Box [redacted] South Perth, Western Australia, 6951.

The petition is for His Royal Highness, King Charles III, to declare Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120) was created Earl of Oxford in the Peerage of England.

Whereby the essential facts in support of His Majesty declaring the creation are these:

1) Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120) was born in Hungary in 1052 (Dr Emily Joan Ward (2020, pp 331-332, p347), "Child King and the Norman Conquest: Representations and Associations of Succession).

2) He, Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120) died in the year 1120, in Scotland (Dr Sayers, Disquisitions, 8vo,1808, p296), with his year of death given by the authority of Sir John Spelman (1480-1546) in his manuscripts of reports cited by Reverend John Sharpe (Sharpe, J, 1854, p238, "William of Malmesbury, A History of the Norman Kings", tr. by J. Sharpe with revised notes by J. Stevenson, Volume 3, Part 1).

3) Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120) married Margaret Canmore, sister of Malcolm III of Scotland, but Edgar died without issue (Sir Bernard Burke & John Burke, 1848, p XV, "Royal Families of England, Scotland, and Wales," Lineage of Queen Matilda, Consort of Henry I).

4) Immediately prior to William of Normandy being made King William I (r. 1066-1087), Edgar was the last Saxon King Edgar II (r. Oct-Dec 1066) and last male descendant in the male line of Cerdic (Royal UK, Edgar Ætheling, r. Oct-Dec 1066) Royal UK genealogical roll of the Kings of England; the British Library Board, Royal 14 B. VI membrane; cf. Baxter S. D, 2009, p97, Edward the Confessor and the Succession Question).

5) Given Edgar died childless he was the only male "Ætheling" known to have directly descended from Cerdic along the patronymic line in England during the period post 5th January 1066 to 1120 and forever, thereafter.

6) William I created, or re-confirmed, Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120), Earl, December 1066 by expert eyewitness account by the circuit royal commissioner for Essex who entered into record written in Latin in his own handwriting the "***Comes Edgar***", into the State Document, known as "Essex folio 4, Great Chesterford, Essex 1, 9 (cf., translation in English of the same, per se, "Earl Edgar" by Doubleday H.A (1903, p337, p338, fn. 1, p430, "Victoria County History [V.C.H.] of Essex, Vol I").

7) "***Edgar Ætheling, Earl of Oxford 1067, first creation***" was researched and written down by Robert Glover (pre-1588) in his unpublished research written in Latin, "Nobilitas Politica vel Civilis". His manuscript is believed to be held by the Royal Collection Trust (Source: State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia).

8) Robert Glover (1544-1588) is considered by the Petitioner to be a doubtless principal authority relied upon by the Crown for such matters. He was at the time of his death, Somerset Herald and previously Officer of Arms at the College of Arms, and since is regarded among Britain's great heralds; and Glover's research findings for Edgar, is altogether consistent with the State Document, "Essex folio 4, Great Chesterford, Essex 1, 9".

9) An English translation of his original research by his nephew, Thomas Milles (1610, p 54-55, p 674) "Catalogue of Honor" is also a principal authority, the Crown refers (Gadd, R.P, 1985, pp 130-131, Peerage Law).

*Continued ...*

10) More recently, and as a separate and discrete principal authority, Robert Kelham (1788, p345) Attorney of the King's bench most trustworthy and reliable entry is for Edgar's position of nobility under William I, in 1086, "***Edgar Ætheling*, Earl of Oxford, *Manors of Barkway and Hormead, Hertfordshire***". Kelham's research is altogether consistent with the State Document, "Essex folio 4, Great Chesterford, Essex 1, 9; and Robert Glover entities in Thomas Milles 1610, p45, pp 54-55, p674 for Edgar Ætheling, Earl of Oxford).

11) Henry Knighton's 1396 "Knighton's Chronicles 1337-1396" (Column 2343, William I, "***Comites Edgar Athelyng***") is further considered as a most trustworthy and reliable source, given Dr Geoffrey Haward Martin's (1928-2007) examination and translation of Knighton's research into English in a book he published in 1995.

12) It is the late Dr G.H. Martin (1995) former Record Keeper UK (1982-1988) and co-editor along with Dr Ann Williams (1986) "Domesday Book: Studies" published by Alecto Historical Editions who did not question the credibility of Knighton's (1396) listing of "Comites Edgar Athelyng" and left Column 2343, William I, as is.

In the expert opinion of Professor Tom Licence, MA, MPhil, PhD, FHEA, FRHistS, FSA, Professor of Medieval History, University of East Anglia, Senior Research Fellow, Magdalene College, Cambridge, who examined the veracity of the evidence submitted within this supplemental petition, concluded in favour of the petitioners' Edgar the Aetheling was created an Earl by William I.

This peerage of England for Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120) has not been formally recognised by the Crown. For this reason, we, the Petitioners, set out in our submissions annexed hereto, the added evidence Edgar created by William I, Earl of Oxford 1066/67.

Your Petitioners therefore most humbly pray that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to recognise and declare that Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120), was created or affirmed by King William I as a Peer of the Realm in the title and style of Earl of Oxford, first creation 1066/67, in the Peerage of England.

Signed by the Petitioners:

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Petitioners, hereafter referred to as the Petitioner, acknowledges and gives thanks, and gratitude, to the following experts and modern historians who gave up their time and expertise to either guide the Petitioner to where he could locate otherwise obscure fresh evidence within Doctor of Philosophy dissertations; other publication from credible authorities; and/or alternatively, connect him to better placed experts, given the subject matter.

From the fresh evidence uncovered, most of the evidence assembled within has either a time stamp or can be placed clearly within the time period 1066-1068, and is specific to the person, Edgar the Ætheling (1052-1120), and his position under William I:

- **Professor Tom Licence, MA, MPhil, PhD, FHEA, FRHistS, FSA, Professor of Medieval History, University of East Anglia, Senior Research Fellow, Magdalene College, Cambridge**. Tom's publications include: 2011, Hermits and Recluses in English society, 950-1200; 2014, Herman the Archdeacon and Goscelin of Saint-Bertin: Miracles of St Edmund, ed; 2014, Bury St Edmonds and the Norman Conquest, edited; 2015, What the Victorians Threw Away, Oxbow book). Professor Tom Licence recently in 2020 published "Edward the Confessor: Last of the Royal Blood". He further gave his expert opinion on the veracity of the evidence submitted within this supplemental petition, and concluded Edgar the Ætheling was created an Earl by William I.
- **Dr Rosamond McKitterick, PhD, renowned English medieval historian (pre-conquest/Europe).** Dr McKitterick took the time to connect the Petitioner to Professor David Bates. She further advised of journal articles, and obscure PhD publications that the Petitioner found valuable in explaining Edgar the Ætheling's (1052-1120) nobility and administrative position in William I's royal administration, during the years 1066-1068.
- **Dr Mathew Champion (PhD) Senior Lecturer, Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne.** Dr Champion stepped in as a local facilitator, in Australia, to assist the Petitioner in making contact with the England based experts above.
- **Dr Kathleen Neal (PhD), Senior Lecturer, School of Philosophical Historical and International Studies at Monash University.** Dr Neal facilitated further contact with Dr Mathew Firth, PhD, in Adelaide South Australia.
- **Dr Matthew Firth (PhD), Lecturer in Medieval Literature and History, at Flinders University in Adelaide.** Dr Firth also kindly provided a response to the Petitioner's questions in regards to the meaning of Williams & Martin (2002, p1432; 1992, p156 & 1986, p156) Domesday definitions and some discussion about Edgar Ætheling's position under King William I during the years 1066-1068.
- **Dr David Bates (PhD) Professor at Emeritus College, University of East Anglia, School of History -** A historian of Britain and France during the period from the 10$^{th}$ to 13$^{th}$ centuries. Dr Bates has written many books and articles during his career, and emailed his suggestions, via Dr Rosamond McKitterick, where, perhaps, the Petitioner may find more about Edgar the Ætheling's position under William I for the period 1067-1068, amongst obscure PhD dissertations.
- **Dr Marc Morris (PhD),** independent consultant, self-employed for providing the names of other better placed authorities to assist the Petitioner. **Marc is an author, historian, and also a television presenter of English history (Castle, Channel 4)**.

With equal gratitude and thanks, the petitioner further acknowledges Mr Grant Bavister, College of Arms for his ongoing assistance and sage advice leading up to, and throughout the period this supplemental petition was prepared.

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## Letter of expert opinion

*Professor Tom Licence, MA, MPhil, PhD, FHEA, FRHistS, FSA*
*Professor of Medieval History, University of East Anglia*
*Senior Research Fellow, Magdalene College, Cambridge*

I write at the request of the petitioners with specific reference to their statement in A130, that 'Edgar the Aetheling was created an Earl by William I'.

To begin with, I will present additional evidence, and an argument of my own:
The earliest source touching on the matter of William I's treatment of Edgar is the *Carmen de Hæstingæ proelio* ('Song of the Battle of Hastings'), written in 1067/8 by Bishop Guy of Amiens.

Guy claims that when William invaded England (in late September 1066), he sent a messenger to King Harold, offering to grant him the lands his (Harold's) father had held in return for renouncing the throne and recognising William as king. The 'lands his father had held' ('terram quam pridem tenuit pater', cited from Barlow's edition of the *Carmen*, p. 16), refers to the earldom of Wessex.

Thus, we have it on the evidence of the well-informed observer, Guy, who was chaplain to William's queen, and writing within a year or two of the conquest, that William was the sort of man who might offer – and who was believed to have offered – an earldom as recompense to a king for renouncing the throne.

A few months later, William was in a similar position of wishing to persuade another king to renounce the throne. The king now was Edgar Aetheling. The petitioners are entirely correct, that the English had established him upon the throne in October or November. The *Carmen* (p. 38) indicates that Edgar had been elected ('electus'), and crowned ('in regem sacrent'), and that the news went out that London had a king ('sparsit fama volens quod habet Lundoniam regem'). William of Poitiers, who employed the *Carmen* as a source for his *Gesta Guillelmi* ('Deeds of William [the Conqueror]') in the 1070s, read the passage to mean as much, and wrote that the English 'instated King Edgar Aetheling' ('regem statuerant', p. 147, citing Davis and Chibnall's edition). Further confirmation comes in the fact that the monks of Peterborough sent Brand, their abbot-elect, to Edgar, for his royal confirmation as their abbot (referenced in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle E text annal for 1066).

After his victory over Harold at Hastings on 14 October 1066, William took a round-about route to London, before preparing to besiege the city, where the new king, Edgar, and the leading men were holding out. Preferring to avoid bloodshed, William initiated negotiations. These are mentioned in our early sources, the *Carmen* and the *Gesta Guillelmi*. The negotiations were – from William's perspective – a success, resulting in the submission of the leading men, and in Edgar renouncing his kingship in recognition of William's title. While the *Carmen* says nothing of the inducements which William offered, William of Poitiers, in the *Gesta Guillelmi* (p. 162), states that he endowed Edgar Aetheling with 'sizeable lands' ('amplis terris ditavit' - with *amplus* having the sense of 'extensive'/ 'important'/ 'honourable', and *dito* having 'enriched' as its meaning).

Given that William had thought – or was believed to have thought – that an earldom was suitable recompense for a king with whom he was negotiating earlier that year, it is highly likely that he would have offered King Edgar a similar inducement to renounce his royal title.

Indeed, I think it unlikely that William would have offered him anything *less* than an earldom, for Edgar's royal title and the support which he enjoyed were equal to nothing less, and William was faced with the unhappy alternative of besieging London in the winter – something he would have gone to great lengths to avoid.

As mentioned above, William of Poitiers claims that William recompensed Edgar with 'sizeable lands' – a statement which reinforces the idea that his reward was an earldom. While it might be objected that he does not *call* the reward an earldom, his reference to sizeable lands is comparable to the one which I cited earlier from the *Carmen*, in which 'the lands his [i.e. Harold's] father had held' can only refer to the earldom of Wessex. From this example, there is clear evidence that a continental writer could conceive of an English earldom in terms of lands, rather than in terms of offices and titles to which comital lands attached. It is therefore not a concern that William of Poitiers makes no specific mention of Edgar's reward having been an earldom.

I further note that William was content to let the existing earls keep the title *Earl* and the lands attached to their offices, and that this approach would be compatible to him either confirming Edgar in such a role or granting him a comital (i.e. an earl's) title as recompense for relinquishing his royal office.

On this evidence, I consider the balance of probabilities to be that the Norman duke (and later king) William offered Edgar an earldom in 1066 and made him earl either at the end of 1066 or early in 1067.

I will now comment briefly on certain aspects of the evidence adduced in the petition, starting with the Domesday evidence.

If, as I think most likely, Edgar was granted an earldom in 1066/7, then by his rebellion in 1068 or 1069, that earldom would have fallen forfeit. Domesday Book captures evidence of who held lands and titles at two moments in time: first, near the end of 1065 in the reign of King Edward (TRE - Tempus regis Eadwardi), and second, in 1086 (TRE – Tempus regis Willelmi), at the time Domesday was compiled. It would therefore not be expected that a man who obtained an earldom in 1066 and lost it in c. 1068 would appear as an earl in Domesday Book. The landholder named as *Comes Edgarus* ('Earl Edgar') in Great Chesterford, Essex, is thought by modern experts, to represent Ælfgar, another earl, whose abundant holdings were posthumously recorded. This is certainly the view of Stephen Baxter and Chris Lewis, who are the editors of *Domesday PASE* (the online Domesday prosopography database), which is a better-grounded study than most interpretation that has gone before. It is not necessary for Edgar to appear in Domesday Book for this petition to make a credible case. In my opinion, it is more likely that Edgar, having been an earl, would not show up in Domesday Book. If, however, he does, then the case is clinched regardless of the argument which I put forward.

Secondly, it is evident that certain authorities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries believed that Edgar was created earl of Oxford. Their opinion merits consideration, as it is, on the whole, unlikely that such an idea would arise out of nowhere, and it must be allowed that those authorities may have consulted sources that are unknown to us, having been lost in the intervening centuries.

In Appendix 2 of his study of the earls of Mercia, Stephen Baxter, who is the lead expert on the earldom, demonstrates the extent of the uncertainty around who held the earl's office in Oxfordshire after the death of Earl Ralph in 1057. There is writ evidence that Harold's brother Gurth was earl there in 1065, but Gurth died in the battle of Hastings (14 October 1066), creating a vacancy (if indeed he had been earl in Oxfordshire). The previous incumbent, Ralph, had been Edward the Confessor's nephew. It is conceivable that the positioning of Edward's late *nephew* in Oxfordshire might have been a factor in determining which honour to grant to Edward's *great nephew* Edgar - and that the shire of Oxfordshire was considered to be suitable for him for that reason. There is no contemporary evidence that Edgar's earldom centred on Oxfordshire, but the weight of antiquarian testimony, coupled with the reasoning presented above, tends more in that direction than any other.

In conclusion, I find in favour of the petitioners' statement that, on balance of probabilities, Edgar the Aetheling was created an Earl by William I, though I arrive at that conclusion largely by independent arguments, as set out above.

Tom Licence
12 September 2024

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## LETTER SENT BY THE COLLEGE OF ARMS

Grant Bavister
College of Arms, Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BT.

Tuesday 24th September 2024

Dear Mr Guest,

**RE: SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION - DECLARATION OF THE CREATION OF THE EARLDOM OF OXFORD TITLE 1066/67**

Many thanks for your reply.

It is an impressive piece of research; I think many dogmatic academics, or academic types, would never have thought it possible to gather together evidence that *may* be able to show that there *was* an Earldom of Oxford created in 1067 and that is quite an achievement of itself; it has been very interesting working with you on this Petition and I for one have learned a lot from you about the history of the period.

I will be very interested to follow the progress of this matter. The Petition will almost certainly end up on my desk for comment anyway.

Take care & all good wishes,

*Grant Bavister*

Grant Bavister
College of Arms,
Queen Victoria Street,
LONDON, EC4V 4BT.

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## LETTER SENT BY THE COLLEGE OF ARMS

Grant Bavister
College of Arms, Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BT.

**LETTER RECEIVED BY EMAIL**
Sent to Mr Guest, 16th February 2025, Received AEST 23: 45

Dear Mr Guest,

**RE: SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION - DECLARATION OF THE CREATION OF THE EARLDOM OF OXFORD TITLE 1066/67**

This is just a line to let you know, lest you wondered, that the wheels of officialdom *are* turning in relation to the Petition; it has taken rather a long time, but I have just been in correspondence with the Reg of the Peerage about the procedure for consideration of this unusual matter, so I am hopeful that the Govt Lawyers will now start to move this forward. Should I have any other news (if you can this news), I will of course let you know.

With all good wishes,

*Grant Bavister*

Grant Bavister
College of Arms,
130 Queen Victoria Street,
LONDON, EC4V 4BT.

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## REPLY LETTER RECEIVED BY EMAIL

Sent to Mr Guest, 23rd April 2025, Received AEST 20:58

**RE: SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION - DECLARATION OF THE CREATION OF THE EARLDOM OF OXFORD TITLE 1066/67**

Dear Mr Guest,

Firstly, apologies for the delay in formally responding to your email and Petition relating to the creation of the Earldom of Oxford title.

Whilst appreciating the great deal of time and work that has gone into your Petition, I regret to inform you that this office is unable to validate your research, as you suggest. The role of Government is limited to dealing with Peerage claims, through a long-established process set out by Royal Warrant. I am afraid this role does not extend to validating - or otherwise - research documents.

That is not to say that the antecedent fact of the creation of the Earl of Oxford could not form part of a claim to the peerage itself, if you were minded to revive such a claim. However, we are of the view that any such petition is unlikely to succeed, both because of the doubt about the creation of the Earldom and because of the passage of time through which it would be necessary to provide any genealogical lineage.

I am sorry to send a disappointing reply, particularly given the work that has clearly gone into preparing the documentation, but this is not a matter on which His Majesty's Government can take a view.

Kind regards

Ceri King

**Mrs Ceri King, LVO**
Head of Secretariat & Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council
Head of Crown Office, Clerk of the Crown in Chancery
Registrar of the Peerage

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## RESPONSE LETTER: SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION - DECLARATION OF THE CREATION OF THE EARLDOM OF OXFORD TITLE 1066/67

By email only:

Mrs Ceri King, LVO, Head of the Crown Office, Deputy Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, Registrar of the Peerage.
Miss Elaine Chilver, Deputy Head of the Crown Office & Assistant Registrar of the Peerage.
Mr Grant Bavister, College of Arms

2nd May 2025

Dear Mrs King,

On behalf of our family, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your consideration of the Supplemental Petition - Declaration of the Creation of the Earldom of Oxford 1066/67.

Following our efforts to address the creation of the Earldom of Oxford, with all available evidence from our search now exhausted, confirming, *we say*, the likely creation by William I for Edgar the Atheling, we do understand in a general way the reason why His Majesty's Government decided to hold this intriguing and unique peerage question in abeyance.

Grateful are we of the time, expert professional and legal review of our Supplemental Petition provided by the Crown Office, Crown in Chancery, and the Register of Peerage.

We are further deeply thankful for the outstanding professional service and genealogical knowledge provided by the College of Arms, especially Mr Grant Bavister since 2018, as well as Sir Thomas Woodcock, KCVO DL FSA FHS FRHSC, Garter Principal, Kings of Arms (retired), regarding our discrete lineage to Edgar's sister, Margaret, and her husband Malcolm, stepped out in the previous petition, submitted in 2023, and concluded last year.

Yours sincerely,

John Lindsay Robert Guest
Darren John Halifax
Dennis Keith Lillee, MBE, AM

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## EXPERT OPINION – AUTRALIA



# Expert Examiner's Comments

The announcement of the winners of the Alexander Henderson and Don Grant Awards was made on Sunday 25th May 2025 at the AIGS's annual lunch and awards presentation.

The Winner of the Alexander Henderson Award for 2024 was The Hutchings Family: A Journey from Devon to the Wimmera, written by David Hutchings, Elizabeth Bell, Murray Hutchings and Tim Hutchings.

John Guest's Family History in 3 Volumes and Supplementary Book was declared in the opinion of the expert panel of examiner's – "*magnus opus*."

The judges' comments on all the entries are attached.

**4th June 2025**

Family History connections
...tracing ancestors in Australia and beyond
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# EXPERT EXAMINER'S OPINION GUEST FAMILY HISTORY (3 VOLUMES)

**Dr Donald Stuart Garden**, PhD, OAM FFAHS FRHSV, Historian, University of Melbourne, Ret., author and Immediate Past President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and of the Federation of Australian Historical societies.

**Gail White**, is President of Family History Connections (Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies), and the former Information Services Librarian at Eastern Regional Libraries, a family historian and author of several books on her own families.

**Lesley Berry**, who has been involved in family history for over fifty years, holds a Diploma in Family History from the University of Tasmania and is a teacher of family history research and resources.

**Guest Family History in 3 Volumes**

**John Guest**

The author has been many years researching his family, resulting in a three-volume considered to be '*magnus opus'*. The first volume covers the paternal line, the second the maternal line, and the third is a supplementary volume. John has gone to great lengths to ensure that his work is correct and his lines of ancestry are authenticated.

His paternal line has been traced back to medieval Tewkesbury in England. His maternal line goes back to earlier than 1066 in England and Scotland. The supplement adds further confirmation of his family's shared ancient ancestry in Britain.

> ***In the expert examiner's opinion John Guest's three-volume work is 'magnus opus' marking it in our opinion as a remarkable evidence-based study, rarely encountered.***

The 3 volumes and its supplementary book are to be added as a valuable extensive collection of genealogical history books in the AIGS Resource Centre at Blackburn, Victoria, where they will be made available to members and others in person.

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